

NAHJ Board of Directors 2020 Meeting 8/5/2020--REVISED

On 8/5/2020, the NAHJ national board of directors met via conference call for several hours. The board discussed multiple topics related to NAHJ. The following are the minutes from the board meeting. If you have any questions about the minutes please contact Fin Gomez at FGomez@NAHJ.org.

ROLL CALL

Hugo Balta - Nat'l President -Present

Nick Valencia - Nat'l Vice President, Broadcast --Not Present

Yvette Cabrera - Nat'l Vice President, Online- Present

Nancy San Martin - Nat'l Vice President, Print- Present

Geraldine Cols Azoócar - Nat'l Financial Officer- Present

Fin Gomez - NAHJ Nat'l Secretary -Present

Rafael Mejia - Nat'l Spanish At Large Officer - Present

Robert Hernandez - Nat'l Academic Officer-Present

Steve Soliz - Nat'l General At-Large Officer-Present

Rafael Mejía - Region 1 Director -Present

Monica Castillo - Region 2 Director- Present

Melissa Macaya - Region 3 Director- Present

Elwyn Lopez - Region 4 Director- Present

Ninette Sosa - Region 5 Director- Present

Blanca Rios -Region 6 Director - Present

Johnny Cordoba - Region 7 Director-- Present

Cristy Fajardo - Region 8 Director- Present

Angélica Serrano-Román - NAHJ Student Representative-Present

Alberto Mendoza- NAHJ Executive Director- Present

- President Hugo Balta issues a motion to begin the meeting that was quickly seconded by several members of the board. Hugo asks Fin to call the roll.
- Fin calls Roll Call.
- Roll Call Results: Overwhelming majority of board members are present therefore a quorum is called.
- Minutes from last full board meeting are motioned for approval
- Nancy San Martin motions to approve the minutes. Geraldine seconds; unanimously approved by board.
- Hugo Balta gives his thanks and appreciation to the national board, NAHJ executive director and the NAHJ staff.
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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

- Hugo Balta says before the president's report that he will have to break away at some point during the meeting to help with an NAHJ student project.
- Hugo gives thanks to the board for their work the past year, and lists several situations that the board had gone through that had provided perspective and cites the ultimate decision of the board unanimously vote in favor of hosting the elections in September.
- Hugo begins his president's report. Hugo says it will be short. Hugo says he wants to again recognize the board and great staff for your hard work. "Thank you very very much," he says.
- Hugo talks about the past historic year and the pandemic. "It is unbelievable to say the least where we are right now, not only the virtual conference, but the state of the state of our organization compared to how we started the year...and trying to navigate thru this unprecedented time."
- Hugo says he is grateful and proud that NAHJ we are for seeing record numbers of our membership. Hugo thanks administration staff and Alberto Mendoza for their hard work.
- Hugo talks about the great success of Palabra and "fulfilling its mission".
 - Hugo says he's "very proud" of cultural competency guide. Hugo emphasizes that NAHJ leading in this space in regarding tools not just for members but for all journalists.
 - Hugo talks about how important it is that elections this year has been a good process with every position being contested.
 - Hugo says there is a lot going on this week with our members with our organization. It is wonderful to see were hosting a joint contest with NABJ. "I think it is wonderful to see." Says they have really a pioneer in this space . And says he is glad were such a "strong ally" with NABJ.
 - Hugo compliments how Alberto championed the shift in convention to digital. Hugo says he feels "very confident" about the future of our organization
 - Hugo thanks board for the "hard work" and support and counsel. Hugo says that all of us may not have always agreed but we always agreed that we were working in the best interest of NAHJ and the interests of journalism in general.
 - Hugo thanks everyone for their support and moves to Geraldine for the financial report.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Geraldine Cols Azoócar

- Geraldine thanks the board for her opportunity to be on the board now that her time on it is coming to an end. Geraldine talks about how much NAHJ means to her and how much she valued her time on the board. She says being on the board taught her how to be a leader.
- Geraldine gives financial report.
- Geraldine says “ we are in really good financial ground.”
- Geraldine says that income at \$1.2 million at end of June and we are \$380,000 for expenses but we will see more expenses coming in post convention. Geraldine says we should even out by the end of year.
- Geraldine gives a big thanks to Alberto for his fundraising prowess. Geraldine gives Alberto a “huge shout out” bc NAHJ is not just relying on revenue from convention but bc of strong fundraising our organization is financially in a good place
- Geraldine say NAHJ has a “good cash flow”. Geraldine says If money stopped hypothetically for whatever reason we would be in good financial health for 6 months.
- Alberto speaks on financial report said staff took a review budget and in the end the budget did not have to be altered. We realigned some of the items” due to COVID19, and other factors.
- Alberto points to multiple points of the organization’s good financial health: Alberto cites an example of 843,000 just from the grant up from 330,000. We don't have expenses for conventions like we normally would have including travel, hotels etc. All those costs budgets not changed says some had to restructure some of the line items.
- Alberto gives other examples of NAHJ’s financial standing and says “we have a large cash flow, one of the best positions the organization has been in at least a dozen years.”
- Several board members including Hugo and Nancy emphatically thank Geraldine for her incredible, hard work during her time on the board. Hugo says he hopes to one day call her president and thanks her for “your passion.”
- Johnny thanks Geraldine for her work.

- Rafael also thanks Geraldine for her “amazing job” as financial officer.
- Blanca also thanks Geraldine for her time on the board. Thanks her for being a “great mentor” and thanks her for her hard work.
- Alberto says we will have another board meeting in September to approve the audits.
- Nancy thanks the leadership of Hugo, Geraldine and Alberto over the state of the organization..“This is a celebration of where we are today”.
- Nancy thanks Hugo for this leadership of Hugo during tumultuous times and overseeing controversies.

ELECTION REPORT

- Geraldine gives update on election.
 - Geraldine says as of now most races for position will be contested.
 - Geraldine talks about overall changes that have helped the election process this year including the different system for collecting endorsements/nominations.
 - Geraldine says new this year that there will be a forum for candidates to say what their platform is.
 - Geraldine thanks everyone for their hard work and singles out everyone on the elections committee by name.
 - Hugo thanks Geraldine for all her efforts on the election front.

REGIONAL DIRECTOR REPORTS

#1 Rafael Mejia from region 1:

- Rafael talks about the increase in membership 195 members which is a huge success” for region 1.
 - Rafael thanks Hugo, BA, and Alberto for their work. Rafael also thanks Angelica for her work in her region.
 - Rafael about huge success in Puerto Rico for the student chapter and the recent workshop where Hugo and others came to visit.

- Rafael also thanks BA, Yaneth, and Alberto for their help.
- Hugo thanks Rafa for his hard work.

REGION 2

Monica Castillo

- Monica talks about the NYC chapter and how “it is alive and well and very busy”. Monica talks about the success they have had w/ panels and discussions from In person meetings etc to zoom format.
- Monica says last panel discussion received a lot of positive feedback the topic related to reporting during COVID pandemic.
- Monica talks about attendance at zoom meetings and how they have had a high participation.
- Hugo thanks Monica for her work.
- Geraldine asks about the NJ chapter. Monica says they have not responded. Geraldine says we should consider making the chapter dormant. They have not held elections in 3 years and very little if any activity.
- Monica says she will follow up on this area.

REGION 3

- Melissa Macaya says 250 members in region, and thanks Yaneth for all her help.
- Melissa says the “most active chapter” in the region is DC which is currently about 150 people approximately.
- DC chapter has been “very active” says they went to CBS Washington Bureau and got a very great tour through their DC studios and met with the bureau chief. Everyone was very happy with the event..
- Melissa says they had a virtual training due to COVID.

- Melissa says DC chapter has held its own election and has added new board members.
- Melissa says the job fair had to be cancelled but hoping to get back on 2021
- Melissa on Philadelphia chapter. About 50 individuals in the chapter have been very active in setting up great events for members including one with an ABC correspondent Tom Llamas.
- Melissa says the Philadelphia Chapter is looking to boost their membership even more and one possible proposed ideas is to have a joint job fair with the DC chapter to grow membership.
- AU chapter was active last year but chapter paused when members went on study abroad but are now back.
- The University of MD chapter has gone dormant but they want to revitalize next year.
- Melissa says the region is actively going after increasing their memberships.
- Melissa thanks exec board, elections board and staff working with them.

REGION 4

- Elwyn Lopez gave an extensive regional update on Region 4 and its recent accomplishments during the subsequent zoom meeting. We will add a supplemental follow up note.
- Supplemental note: Elwyn discussed the great success of the Atlanta chapter and its programs especially one where they pair professionals with students. She said it exceeded expectations, all are very happy about it.
- Elwyn also says the chapter organized extensive panels and guidance for journalists + Chapter also put together covering protests
- She also said Atlanta chapter preparing to hold elections
- Elwyn also brought up the new chapter at UNC. Very active so far.
- Elwyn talks about the central Florida chapter and their efforts and organizing .

REGION 6

Blanca Rios

- Blanca congratulates Hugo for promotion in hosting two new programs.

- Blanca gives her report Chicago has affected some of the normal activities including the big job fair bc of COVID19.
- Blanca says Chicago did hold with NABJ and other journo organizations a virtual conference regarding COVID.
- Blanca say 3 four thousand dollar scholarships have been established in chapter region including donation by Hugo to establish one in name of his grandmother.
- Blanca says “ were going strong” and trying to do what we can do even during COVID. Thanks board thanks administration staff and thanks Hugo.

REGION 7

Johnny Cordoba

- Johnny says it has been challenging overall bc of COVID pandemic
- Johnny thanks Yaneth for all her help and NAHJ national staff for their help with membership, recruitment etc.
- Johnny talks about 2 strong local group chapters including the Arizona State University chapter have been.
- Johnny says he has been forwarding NAHJ material to students including the new cultural competency guide which has been with a positive impact.
- Johnny has been also helping with recruiters as well.

REGION 8

Cristy Fajardo *

- Cristy says overall things are going well in the area, especially LA chapter which has excelled.
- Cristy gives an update on Bay chapter and says the chapter lost its president and is no as active.
- Cristy LA chapter very active held panels on mental health and pre virtual mixer with NAHJ la

- LA Chapter has called on the LA Times to hire more Latinos. Only 13% in the newsroom are Latinx in an area that is 50% latinx
- Cristy talks about how Latino journalists were injured during covering the protests. LA chapter has been active on that front to bring attention to journalists being attacked while doing their jobs, covering protests. LA chapter doing very well.

STUDENT REP REPORT

Angelica Serrano Roman

- Thanks board members including Elwyn for help w/ new chapters and all their help with the information and other forms of assistance.
- Angelica talks about new chapters in NC & CA. Angelica motions that these two new chapters are to be approved by the board. Several board members second it.
- Board approves chapters by unanimous vote

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Alberto Mendoza

(Please note that Alberto gave presentation on the director's report that was emailed out to board and membership. It is a great reference for perusal)

- Alberto talks about the difficulty of navigating the organization through troubled uncharted times such as these. Alberto says "It has been a challenge to get here through the COVID 19 pandemic," Alberto says," It feels like a whole another world since March 2nd(the last time the full board met in person)."

- Alberto talks about the challenges we've faced as an organization and lauds the efforts of both staff and board members and membership. Alberto says he is "really proud" of how we move forward "in the best possible way."
- Alberto going over his report that he sent out to board (please read it as a reference).
- Alberto talks about the progress of the organization over the last 5-6 years.
- Alberto says this is his 3rd board, and his 3rd president. Alberto commends the board for its dedication and work for the organization. Alberto says that "were here bc we want what is best for membership." Alberto thanks all staff and all those helping for their tremendous hard work through unprecedented times especially cites and thanks BA Snyder.
- Alberto extols the incredible progress that has been made on the membership front during COVID 19 pandemic: Alberto says that during the pandemic "we went into action mode" and gives his thanks to everyone for their hard work.
- Alberto on membership increase: We have added 700 members in the past 6 months during a pandemic, Alberto says "As Rober likes to say NAHJ has its swag back." Thanks everyone again for getting us there again.
- Alberto says that NAHJ now has over 2900 members now (now over 3,000) The board reacts with applause. Alberto calls it "a historic high". Alberto says it is an: "incredible milestone" in the history of the organization.
- Alberto says we have one of the lowest membership fees but NAHJ has gone into action to help those who have not been able to pay.
- We tend to have one or 2 we now have 11 new lifetime members in first 6 months of the year. Alberto: "which is unheard of." Thanks Yaneth for her incredible work and says her title has changed. Nancy San Martin gives shout out to Yaneth. Other board members jump in and give their thanks also.
- Alberto talks about the great workshops and training programs that have been initiated by NAHJ and the tremendous impact it has as well as positive feedback. He says from March until the end of June NAHJ have trained 1,058 members "all virtual during the pandemic". Some topics on mental health and reporting during pandemic, protests.
- Alberto gives thanks to his team and says the entire team "has been working very hard."

- Alberto on scholarships awarded and how we've been adding scholarships during a pandemic which is an impressive feat. Alberto says this year approximately 90 scholarships. Alberto says this has a lot to do with our NAHJ fundraising abilities.
- Alberto say NAHJ Student Boot camps have” been very very well received”. Including CA, TX, PR. Alberto cites the increased involvement in by students.
- Alberto say scholarship money has increased big: This year we were close to \$200,000 in scholarship including Facebook money secured by Alberto for 50,000 a year for next 5 years. Alberto says People seeing NAHJ as a place to recognize young talent.
- Alberto expresses gratitude for the \$10,000 scholarship from CBS for Ana Real scholarships.
- Alberto wants to establish money to help established journalists get to the next level.

SOCIAL MEDIA

- Alberto gives “big big big shout out” to BA Snyder and her Veritas team for all their amazing work on social media.
 - Brand identity and followers as increased over the last couple years dramatically.
 - BA Snyder came with #MoreLatinosInNews is a hashtag.. Just to recognize how amazing impact: Over 75 million impressions on just the hashtag #moreLatinosinnews. Alberto gives kudos to BA for the hashtag:”That came from us. We see people using that all the time.”
 - Alberto says NAHJ expects continued growth and brand impact: We continue to just grow on social media.
- **INCOME VS EXPENSES**: 2020 is very interesting first year that we will have foundation money be more than the money we generate from a convention.” I am extremely proud of that” when Alberto arrived he said there was little funding available for operations and now this is not the current state of operations but the exact opposite. And that we are in good operation standing.

- Nancy and Yvette both express their thanks for their hard work of Alberto and the administration and operating staff.
 - Alberto says we have a new federal id number between DC and CA.
 - Do other chapters retain attorneys? Alberto is uncertain.
 - Alberto asks board: Do we need a attorney or firm on retainer? It is something the board should think about.
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- Alberto we have a really good relationship with NABJ. The fact that we are at 3500 for convention is “incredible” to me considering the format. “It will be a financially lucrative convention” but also because the overhead cost is low.
 - Alberto thanks Robert Hernandez for all the program work and the big membership push.
 - Alberto talks about the success of the added scholarships for Puerto Rico. Alberto thanks Angelica for her NAHJ work in PR.
 - Alberto says they have paid off loans that NAHJ had borrowed from themselves which was a big initiative from the previous NAHJ president Brandon Benavides.
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- Alberto brings up all of the accomplishments of 2019 and list a number of highlights.
 - Alberto names a number of items and says we have really focused to help chapter/members, and have increased and had success with NAHJ workshops for journalists, and students.
 - Alberto talks about We had EIJ in San Antonio which was also “a successful convention”. Momentums really have been very positive.
 - We launched Palabra which has made a huge impression. Alberto says that NAHJ has raised 300,000 alone in the last 6 months just for Palabra. Profile for palabra is “very strong” and the reception has been outstanding. Freelance journalists have been offered work. It has quickly become a major spotlight for freelance positions.
 - Alberto talks about the Ford foundation grant, NAHJ of three organizations to receive the grant. Additional 320,000 that goes to support content a Palabra.

- Alberto talks about Toyota partnership. They are also giving money for Palabra.
- Puerto Rico has been important component of NAHJ from different .
- Alberto brings up about Google training partnership. Focus on research tools to be focused on Spanish we trained 250 journalists who have received that training.
- **CULTURAL COMPETENCY GUIDE:** NAHJ released the day before. Alberto says 12 newsroom leaders and directors provided feedback for the guide. Alberto says it has been a process. Alberto talks about the impact of the guide, "no one is doing this". We can always modify but not come from a place where we are pacified over what's happening on our community. "Our voices for our people".
- Updated Fiscal Policy: First update since the 90s
- "This year has been one of the best years" for the organization "NAHJ has its swag back."
- **VIRTUAL CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS:** Alberto says first virtual convention without a doubt the start of something.
- Alberto says people are attending who don't "have opportunity to travel" who are now attending. Alberto says that either way moving forward there will be a virtual component to conventions.
- Alberto on success of virtual convention: Over 120 booths, even when virtual. NAHJ increased in sales.
- Not a lot of representation of both orgs on some panels.
- Blanca: Thanks Robert for his help. Says how happy she is about the outcome of the convention. It was definitely a struggle but the outcome has been really good.
- Robert says thanks everyone for the efforts on the convention planning. Robert says " it has been a journey" bc of the pandemic and the historic times. Robert thanks his team for finding " ways around limitations". Robert says our programming stands out compared to other organizations.
- Robert says this is last year for him on curriculum but there will be good people replacing him.
- Nancy ask a question about job fair and helping mid level members get to management positions

- Fin also makes that point that he has heard criticism from our membership about how their should be more focus on how to get more Latinos in news management.
- Alberto also says NAHJ is working with NABJ for a joint convention in Las Vegas in 2022, and Chicago in 2024. We know where our partnerships are for the next 6 years of our conventions. We have solid partnership” w/ NABJ. Thanks and says he's grateful to NABJ leadership, counterparts at the organization.
- Robert mentions that Joe Biden presentation which was embargoed has trickled out despite embargo.
- Yvette(taking place of Hugo) asks on old business. Nothing offered.
- Yvette asks about new business.

BYLAWS REPORT

Robert Hernandez

- Robert says he can seek assistance from a attorney for the bylaws committee. Robert says bylaws committee decided to focus on 3 things for this election:
 - 1) Make sure the student representative on the board can vote. Robert says there is confusion and this needs to be clarified and NAHJ needs to reaffirm their ability to vote. Angelica should be able to vote. Lets clarify this area, he says.
 - 2) Robert’s second thing is to reaffirm and ensure the organization is transparent. Minutes posting readily available on website. Movement by members to really hold organization and administration on transparency.
 - 3) Robert says committee wants to clear up confusion about election. Decouple the election and membership meeting and make that change in bylaws. We may not change that but add clarity around the election. Newly elected board starts their turn on January.

Other things were more along the lines of streamlining the election. We need clarity as there as well

- Robert says other things that will be focus after election: reexamining regions, and board makeup and how to hold board members accountable if they violate code of conduct and NAHJ event. But complicated. This Saturday we will have a draft of our proposals.
- Robert says we want a town hall meeting on August 17th to focus on bylaws. We want to have a zoom town hall. Hopefully Robert says we can announce it at the annual meeting this Saturday.
- Robert says the committee will propose another change including having the newly elected board starting in January, if approved.
- By end of August, the board will have language changes and then the plan is to put the proposed changes to the bylaws on the ballot so people can agree to amending the bylaws which need 2/3rds of members who voted.
- Robert thanks those on the bylaws committee and names and thanks them all.
- Geraldine brings up archives: hoping to have a couple proposals before the end of this board on archives, to have archives categorized.

OPEN TO MEMBERS

- Board opens up to questions to any members on the call. No one responds.
- Alberto updates on how close membership is to 3,000 (following the call NAHJ did reach that historic high) .
- Nancy moves to adjourn the meeting, Rafael 2nds. Board adjourns until executive session.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The national board then reconvened in executive session where they discussed organizational staff matters.

